European Capitals of Culture for 2020-2033

- Full list of countries hosting European Capitals of Culture adopted
- Candidate or potential candidate countries can take part
- EFTA/EEA countries can also designate a Capital of Culture every three years

Every year, two Member States designate a city to host the European Capital of Culture and, for the first time, EFTA/EEA countries can participate in this programme once every three years.

The European Capitals of Culture initiative aims to safeguard and promote the richness and diversity of cultures and encourage citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural area. The cultural programme and cultural investments of the year of European Capital of Culture should contribute to the re-generation and long-term sustainable development of the cities.

Designation of the European Capital of Culture

Six years before a Member States hosts a European Capital of Culture, it organises a competition to select a city. A panel of independent European and national experts make a first list of potential Capital of Culture candidate cities. In a second phase of the competition, the panel examines and picks one city in each country, based on a cultural programme specifically designed for that city, which should have a strong European dimension and be part of a long-term strategy with a sustainable impact on local economic, cultural and social development.

The provisional agreement with the Council and the Commission decision was approved by 606 to 54 and 6 abstentions.
"The European Capital of Culture initiative has proven to be very effective in strengthening the bonds and sense of belonging among European citizens. I am very satisfied with the enlargement voted for today, it will strengthen the cultural ties we share with our neighbour countries."

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